

Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-11 SAJ-01 SAM-01 BIB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

OTPE-00 EB-07 /074 W

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O R 041816Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4837

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1707

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP

SUBJ: RADIO LIBERTY

1. THE "ARRIBA" (THE NEWSPAPER OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT) THIS MORNING CARRIED AN ARTICLE FROM ITS NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT, FELIX ORTEGA, ENTITLED "RADIO LIBERTY - AN OBSTACLE BETWEEN MADRID AND MOSCOW". ORTEGA SAID SOVIET DIPLOMATIC SOURCES (OBVIOUSLY AT THE UN) HAD TOLD HIM THAT IF THE SPANISH GOVT WERE REALLY INTERESTED IN NORMALIZING RELATIONS, MADRID COULD DEMONSTRATE INITIATIVE IN ELIMINATING OBSTACLES, BY TERMINATING THE RADIO LIBERTY (RL) CONTRACT.

2. ORTEGA SAYS THAT MOSCOW HAS ALWAYS CONSIDERED RL/RFE SUBVERSIVE ENTITIES AND RELICS OF THE COLD WAR. THEY ARE NOT AGAINST THE VOICE OF AMERICAN OR SIMILAR STATIONS WHOSE OBJECTIVES, FROM THE SOVIET POINT OF VIEW, ARE DIFFERENT.

3. THE SOVIET SOURCES TOLD ORTEGA THAT RL CONSTITUTES AN INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE SOVIET UNION AND SPAIN (SIC), AFFIRMING CATEGORICALLY THAT THIS STATION, CONFIDENTIAL

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MANAGED BY THE CIA, IS BEING UTILIZED FOR ESPIONAGE.

THEY INVOKED DETENTE AND ALLEGED THAT RL OPENLY VIOLATES THE FINAL ACT OF THE CSCE, ALSO SIGNED BY SPAIN. THEY CLAIM IT WOULD BE CONVENIENT FOR SPAIN TO TERMINATE THE CONTRACT, ALLEGING THAT SPAIN OBTAINED IMPORTANT CONCESSIONS FROM THE AMERICANS ON THE BASES ARRANGEMENTS. SINCE RL IS NOT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO THE U.S., SPAIN COULD ALSO GET THIS CONCESSION.

4. SPAIN WOULD DO A SERVICE TO EAST AND WEST, GIVING GREATER AUTHORITY TO HER POSITION IN EUROPE AND DEMONSTRATING HER POLITICAL INDEPENDENCE. THE SOVIETS HELD OUT THE BAIT (WHICH ORTEGA SAID SURPRISED HIM BECAUSE OF ITS IMPLICATIONS) THAT TERMINATION "WOULD HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE INTERNAL ACTIVITY OF SPANISH RADICAL EXTREMISTS WHO COULD NOT USE THIS (RL) AGAINST THE SPANISH GOVT."

5. ORTEGA COMMENTED THAT THE MATTER IS IMPORTANT TO THE SOVIETS BUT LACKS REAL IMPORTANCE FOR EITHER MADRID OR WASHINGTON. ORTEGA SAID HE HAS THE IMPRESSION THAT MOSCOW INTENDED THROUGH THIS INTERVIEW TO PASS A MODERATE MESSAGE TO MADRID THAT THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN TROUBLES ON THE IBERIAN PENINSULA AND WISH DIALOGUE WITH THE GOS. HIS OPINION IS THAT IT WOULD BE WORTH DROPPING RL TO SEE WHAT, IF ANYTHING, THE SOVIETS MIGHT DO BY WAY OF RESPONSE.

6. WE HAVE REPORTED THIS RATHER FULLY IN HOPES THAT OUR SOVIETOLOGISTS MIGHT SHED SOME LIGHT ON WHY THE SOVIETS ARE GIVING CONFLICTING SIGNALS TO MADRID (E.G., THE PRAVDA ARTICLE). AS FAR AS RL IS CONCERNED, THE MESSAGE HERE MAY BE TOO HEAVY-HANDED FOR THE SOVIETS OWN GOOD, WITH ITS IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET ABILITY TO CONTROL SPANISH DOMESTIC RADICAL ELEMENTS. AT ALL EVENTS, WE HAVE SPANISH AGREEMENT TO EXTENSION OF RL CONTRACT AND NOW WE MUST OBTAIN AN ACCEPTABLE EXTENSION. TO SUPPORT THIS END WE CONTINUE OUR QUIET CONTACTS WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY (TO WHICH WE ARE MAKING THE ARGUMENTS IN STATE 050487) WHILE AWAITING AREILZA'S RETURN TONIGHT. WE JUDGE THAT A PUBLIC RESPONSE IF ANY, WOULD BE BEST LEFT UNTIL AFTER WE HAVE NAILED DOWN THE LENGTH OF THE EXTENSION. STABLER

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